

STRYKER RANCH TIMBER SALE

September 15, 2008 Land Board

LOCATION OF SALE

- Stillwater Unit (NWLO) – Approximately 12 miles north of Olney, Montana.
- Lincoln County – Section 36, T34N-R25W
- 100% Common School.
- The proposed sale is within the Wildland Urban Interface.

SALE VOLUME AND ESTIMATED VALUE

- The estimated volume is 2,106 tons (228 MBF), with an estimated minimum value of \$26,156.52 or \$12.42/ton. In addition to the estimated stumpage value, a fee of \$2.95/ton for Forest Improvement would be charged for all merchantable sawlog timber harvested.
- The conversion factor is 7.31 tons/MBF.

SALE AND HARVEST TREATMENTS

- This timber sale consists of one harvest unit that totals 77 acres.
- The proposed treatments include seedtree with reserves (80%) and commercial thinning (20%). A variation of treatments within the harvest unit would emulate the effects of mixed-severity and stand-replacement fires across the landscape.
- The treatment will reduce forest fuel loadings while improving the long-term productivity of timber stands by increasing vigor, regenerating portions of the stand where growth is decreasing, and reducing the incidence of insect infestations and disease infections.
- No old growth will be harvested.

HARVEST SYSTEMS

- 100% Tractor

ROAD CONSTRUCTION

- Approximately 0.25 mile of temporary road is required to access the harvest unit. An additional 0.5 mile of temporary spur road may be built.
- Upon completion of the sale the existing road restrictions will remain in effect to maintain wildlife security, reduce the spread of noxious weeds, and minimize future maintenance costs.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

- This 77-acre harvest area was covered under the *Point of Rocks Timber Sale Project Environmental Assessment (August 2005)*. Most of the harvest areas covered by the Point of Rocks Environmental Assessment are currently under a Timber Sale Contract.

- Public involvement included:
 - local newspaper advertisements;
 - an initial scoping letter describing the proposed project that was sent to interested parties and had a 30-day comment period; and
 - the Point of Rocks Timber Sale Project Environmental Analysis (EA) and Finding (August 2005) that was also sent to interested parties.

The public, DNRC specialists, and specialists from other agencies helped identify the issues that were analyzed. The areas of concern were wildlife, aesthetics (visuals), water quality, and native fisheries. Five comments were received during the Point of Rocks EA scoping process; two were in support of the project and three raised issues, which are mentioned below.

- Since the completion of the Point of Rocks EA, the adjacent private property has been sold. The new landowner has been informed of this small timber sale and has been given a tour of the harvest area.

PUBLIC COMMENTS, ISSUES AND MITIGATIONS

- **Fuels Reduction** – This area has rural homesteads near the Stryker Ranch Timber Sale that is within a wildland urban interface (WUI). Additionally, approximately 0.6 miles of the BNSF railroad line is adjacent to the State lands in this project. This project would reduce dense fuels on more than 10 acres within the wildland urban interface and the State land/railroad interface. Firefighting efforts would benefit from upgraded transportation system and proposed harvest prescriptions.
- **Aesthetics** – Existing non-merchantable trees along open roads would be retained to provide a visual screen into the harvest units; landings would be located away from open roads. In addition, harvest prescriptions would retain a variable amount of large trees and some vigorous submerchantable trees within the harvest units. Site preparation would promote regeneration within several years.
- **Fisheries and Water Quality** – The harvest unit along Stillwater River will be managed in accordance with the rules for fish bearing streams. A 113-foot-wide setback where no harvesting will occur has been established along the Stillwater River. A Riparian Management Zone was delineated around the wetlands; no harvest areas were included near Streamside Management Zones (SMZs).
- **Wildlife**
 - The fisher was a concern in the riparian area; the sale was designed to retain adequate habitat. Adequate coarse woody debris and snags (preference of western larch) in the 21-plus dbh¹ class would be retained, if they exist; where snags of this size do not exist, the next largest snag and coarse woody debris would be retained.
 - Gray Wolf – The reduction of hiding cover and the effect of on wolves is expected to be minimal due to the low levels of wolf use in the area.

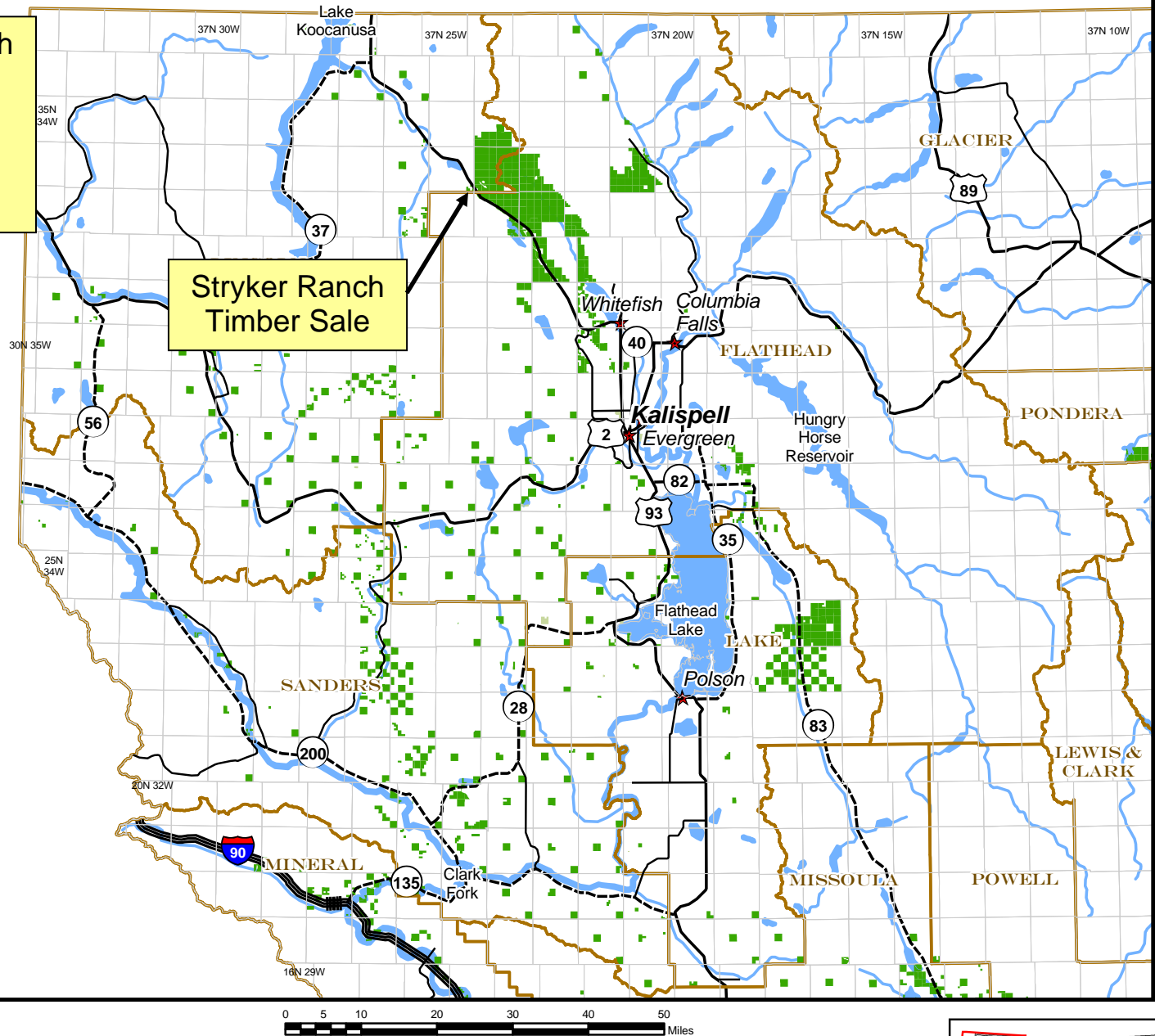
The Director recommends that the Land Board direct the Department to sell the Stryker Ranch Timber Sale Project.

¹ Diameter at breast height

Stryker Ranch Timber Sale Vicinity Map

Attachment A
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Stryker Ranch Timber Sale



	Interstate Highway		Rivers		Lakes
	U.S. Route		City		DNRC managed for timber
	State Highway		County		DNRC other
	Secondary Roads				Township/Range

21 February 2007
Montana DNRC
Technical Services Section/dr

